Later History of the Royal Zoological Society of New South Wales

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In the first part of this overview (Strahan 1992), I dealt with events between 1852 and 1912. In brief, the attempt to form a zoological society in 1852 failed, but the major proponents — Dr George Bennett, the Rev. George Turner, Charles Moore, Arthur Holroyd and Henry Parkes — surfaced again in 1861 as founders of the Acclimatization Society of New South Wales. This body declined to near extinction and, in 1879, Walter Bradley proposed the establishment of a new acclimatization body, the New South Wales Zoological Society. The Society built a zoo in Moore Park and managed it from 1881 to 1916, when the animal collection and staff were transferred to the government-appointed Taronga Zoological Park Trust. In practical terms, the Society relinquished management of the zoo in 1912, when its Director, Albert Le Souef, was made Secretary to the Trust and Director of the Taronga project.

It must be emphasized that, initially, the Society had almost nothing to do with zoology. Apart from Bennett (who was 80 when the Moore Park Zoo was established), there were no naturalists on the Council of the Society until the election of 1910. Then, in what seems to have been a last-minute attempt to give scientific respectability to the governing body, all but four of the sitting Councillors were dumped and, of the 15 new Councillors, five were professional zoologists: Charles Hedley (conchologist); Alan McCullough (ichthyologist); W. J. Rainbow and W. W. Froggatt (entomologist) and T. Harvey Johnson (parasitologist). Also elected was a well-respected amateur ornithologist, A. F. Bassett Hull. Launcelot Harrison joined the Council a year later: He and Harvey Johnston later occupied Australian chairs of zoology.

This revolution came too late to keep the zoo in the Society's management. On the other hand, it provided the basis of Australia's first scientific society devoted entirely to zoology. How this opportunity was exploited is the subject of the second part of my sketch. Finding it difficult to hold all the strands together in a continuous narrative, I shall dissect the history under several headings — at the cost of some repitition.

RELATIONS WITH TARONGA ZOO

When the Taronga Zoological Park Trust was established in 1912, it comprised seven members, five of whom were Councillors of the Society. This proportion diminished as the Trust increased in size and the founding members retired or died. Nevertheless, there was a convention that the Society could nominate a member for at least one position on the Trust. The first of these was A. F. Bassett Hull, one of the most active members of Council, nominated in 1926. He was followed by Aubrey Halloran in 1929 and Professor W. J. Dakin in 1936.

In 1941, in a quite remarkable manner, Hull resigned from the Trust on the condition that he be replaced by E. J. L. Hallstrom. Hallstrom had made many gifts to the Society and the Zoo and it is indicative of his influence that he was able, with the concurrence of the Society, to get onto the Board in this manner. He later became President of the Trust and Director of the Zoo.

I joined the Trust in 1966 as a nominee of the Council: indeed, I was brought onto Council with this is mind. In 1967, I succeeded Hallstrom as Director. When my position on the Trust became vacant, Frank Talbot (then Director of the Australian Museum) was nominated as my replacement. He later became Chairman of the Zoological Parks Board, the governing body that succeeded the Trust. Since Talbot left, in 1982, there has been no zoologist on the Board (except for Jack Giles in 1988/89). Interestingly, however there is statutory provision for a veterinarian.

In the very early years of Taronga, there was great hope that the Society would use the animal collection (including off-exhibit holdings) for research. Nothing came of this and, the Society deserted its original home in the Zoo within five years of the Zoo's opening.

Direct relationships were not resumed until 1967, when the Society instituted Associate Membership for people with a primary interest in the Zoo but the idea that the Society could combine its scientific activities with a zoo-support role was misconceived. There were too few members to be significant and, to be an effective support body, the Society would have had to place itself under the control of the Zoo's public relations division. It is difficult to imagine how it could have continued its scientific activities in such circumstances.

However, there was one area of fruitful co-operation. In 1975, the Society established a Zoo Guides Section, providing volunteers trained by the Society, to manage information booths and to conduct tours.

Relations with the Zoo were very strained during the period when Jack Throp was Director (1979–86). He saw no future for the Society except as a support group and, when this could not be achieved, set about the establishment of the "Zoo Friends", in open competition with the Society. The situation eased once the Zoo Friends had become firmly established and Throp's last year saw the Society provided with permanent accommodation.

The Society and the Zoo have been on good terms since then but this involves little activity apart from representation of the Society on the Board's Zoological Committee. Quite independently, some members of the Society are engaged on research projects in the Zoo.

MEMBERSHIP

The Society began with about 400 members but, on average, this dropped by about 100 per decade until 1912, when it reached an all-time low of 83 and there was one Councillor for every five members! Thereafter, it rose fairly rapidly, reaching a peak of nearly 700 in 1937. The Second World War led to a slump to 470 members in 1941 but post-war recovery was rapid, leading to a short-lived peak of 750 in 1949. In the 1950s and 1960s, membership varied between 500 and 650.

In 1967, I became Director of Taronga Zoo and, at the Annual General Meeting of that year, I gave an address to the Society, reviewing its past relations with the Zoo and inviting it to return to its historic base. I further suggested that, since only a minority of members were seriously interested in zoology, it might be appropriate to have two categories of membership: one for zoologists or serious naturalists, the other for those who were more interested in the Zoo. It seemed to me that it would not be difficult to increase membership in this second category, thus providing the funds necessary to maintain and expand the Society's scientific activities. Given a sufficiently large body of such "associate" members, they could conceivably contribute also to the Zoo as a support group and fund-raising body.

This proposal was accepted by Council and the Articles of Association were altered accordingly at a special General Meeting. Two members, Wendy Clayton and Zoe Forbes, then embarked on a recruitment drive and, by 1970, there were 2,650 members, three-quarters of them in the Associate category. As a unilateral gesture, the Society passed on one-third of the subscriptions of the Associate Members to the Zoo, asking only that the Society be represented on a joint committee to decide how this money should be spent. After several years of negotiation, the Zoo refused to accept any such advice and, in the early 1980s, the Society ceased these contributions.

An interesting phenomenon was an enormous increase in Junior Members between 1970 and 1985. There were 70 in 1970 but 760 in 1980. With the establishment of the Zoo Friends in 1983 and the establishment of family membership in that body, there was a steady decline to about 100 Juniors at the present time: these are children with a serious interest in natural history.

Competition from the Zoo Friends also led to a considerable reduction in Associate Membership. Unfortunately (because of an inadvertent change in the format of the Annual Report), we do not have readily available data on membership between 1984 and 1992 but it was reduced to about a half by 1987. In 1992/93 there were about 1,200 adult members, a little more than half of these being Scientific Members. The rapid decline in Associate Members has, to an encouraging extent, been offset by an increase in Scientific Members.

An interesting outcome of the competition between the Zoo Friends and the Society was a demand on the part of the Zoo that subscriptions to the Society should not be less then those for the Friends. Despite a loss of members, this led to an increase in the Society's funds which, in boom times, were very skilfully invested by an Assistant Treasurer, Zoe Forbes, putting the Society on the way to its present satisfactory financial situation.

ACCOMMODATION

Transfer of the very considerable assets of the Society to the Taronga Zoological Park Trust was not a one-way transaction. On its part, the Trust agreed to provide members of the Society, in perpetuity with an annual pass to Taronga Zoo and (up to a maximum of 300 members) with twenty free tickets. Permission was also given to the Society to undertake approved scientific research within the Zoo. The Trust also undertook to provide:

> "Suitable premises within the Park for use by the Council or other governing body of the Society for the purpose of holding its meetings, and of storing its books and records and otherwise of conducting its business."

In 1916, the Society was given the use of a large room, constituting the first floor of the Zoo's Refreshment Rooms, for its library, office, and Council meetings. This could not accommodate a general meeting or lectures, but part of the Refreshment Rooms was made available as required for these functions. The arrangement was not ideal but was indicative of good faith and it was reasonable to expect that more suitable accommodation would eventually be provided.

However, in 1921, the Society moved its office to a room in Bull's Chambers, Martin Place. It is said that the main reason for the move was that the Hon. Secretary, A. F. Basset Hull, who was a very keen philatelist, wanted to be near to the GPO, but it may be that he wished to be near the Department of Mines, where he worked.

The library remained behind and, in 1927, was moved to the main room of the premises above the Zoo Entrance. A. S. Le Souef, Director of the Zoo, had his office in a smaller, adjoining room and was happy to act as librarian, signing books in and out.

By 1937, the premises at Bull's Chambers had expanded to include a lecture room with 60 theatre chairs and in 1942 the Library was moved there from the Zoo. Rent constituted one of the major expenses of the Society and some of the area soon had to be sub-let. By 1958, the Society's occupancy had been reduced to an office but, thanks to the co-operation of Sir Edward Hallstrom, then Director of the Zoo, space was found for the library in a room in the Zoo's administrative building, Hallstrom House. There was no appropriate space for the Society's great collection of unbound journals and stocks of its own publications, which were stored in a damp basement room under the Zoo entrance. Some were used from time to time to start the fire in the building's hot water system.

The lease at Bull's Chambers was terminated in 1967, just prior to its demolition, and the Society no longer had a home. Its premises were reduced to a cupboard in the staff tea-room in the Australian Museum and its meetings were held in a room rented from time to time in Anzac House, a building which used to exist in College Street.

I succeeded Sir Edward Hallstrom as Director of Taronga Zoo in 1967. In 1968 I was able to provide a small room for the Society's Office and in 1970, with the retirement of the Manager of the Zoo, the rooms above the Zoo Entrance — which had been converted into a flat for him and his family — were made available to the Society at the nominal rent of one dollar per week and converted into an office, a library and a meeting room for Council and the Sections of the Society.

This arrangement continued until 1985, when the premises had to be shared with the Zoo's official supporting body, the Association of Zoo Friends. Since they had full-time workers and a number of daytime volunteers, they dominated the use of the area and the Society's share was effectively reduced to a small office and space for the library.

The situation was eventually resolved by adding a room to the Education Centre for the sole use of the Society. The Society contributed $10,000 (about half the cost of construction) and moved into the premises in September 1986.

After nearly three-quarters of a century, the arrangement envisaged in 1912 had been achieved.

PUBLICATIONS

The revolution of 1910 brought a number of professional zoologists onto the Council. They recognized that zoology is a science and that science involves not only discovery but the dissemination of what is discovered. In 1913, the Council decided to issue a serial publication, *The Australian Zoologist*, which would contain "articles of scientific and general interest pertaining to zoology". This could have implied a popular magazine of natural history but the founders set out to create a serious scientific journal, the first in Australia to be concerned exclusively with zoology.

The first part of the first volume, issued in June, 1914, contained nine contributions in 35 pages, the first of these being a challenging paper of world significance by Launcelot Harrison on the significance of biting lice the study of bird evolution — the idea that, since parasites evolve with their hosts, they may carry clues to the evolutionary relationships of those hosts. Other contributions related to the taxonomy or systematics of insects, spiders, crustaceans and fishes.

From the outset, *The Australian Zoologist* was a thoroughly professional journal, well edited, well illustrated and well produced. Some papers were brief and specialized, others were of lasting general significance. Contributors to the first volume included H. Burrell (pioneer in monotreme studies), W. J. Dakin (best known for his work in marine zoology), W. W. Froggatt (entomologist and ornithologist), L. Harrison (evolutionary zoologist), A. S. Le Souef (mammalogist), A. R. McCullough (ichthyologist), T. Harvey Johnston (parasitologist) W. J. Rainbow (entomologist and arachnologist) and Prof. T. T. Flynn (Professor of Zoology in Hobart, the father of Errol). The eighth part of Volume 1 was published in July 1920, comprising 255 pages — an average of 43 pages a year.

The professionalism of the journal was established by Alan McCullough, ichthyologist in the Australian Museum, who was editor for its first six years. He was succeeded for three years by Harrison, by then Professor of Zoology in Sydney University. Thereafter, until 1941, it was edited by A. F. Bassett Hull who, for much of this period, was also Secretary.

Initially, *The Australian Zoologist* included minutes of the Annual General Meeting, the President's Report, reports of the Sections, and membership lists. In 1933, the Society instituted a second serial publication, the annual *Proceedings of the Royal Zoological Society of New South Wales*, to absorb this material and to provide a venue for shorter papers and reports. Hull and the editors who succeeded him, were responsible for both journals. The period from 1942 to 1947 was exceptional in having joint editors, first Hull and the conchologist-ornithologist, Tom Iredale; then Iredale and Gilbert Whitley, ichthyologist. Both Iredale and Whitley were on the staff of the Australian Museum. Except for one year when he was on sabbatical leave, Whitley was sole editor of both journals from 1948 to 1970.

Over this period, there were enormous developments in Australian zoology, reflected in an explosive increase in the number of specialist societies, each with its own publication. CSIRO also entered the field with several biological journals of very high standard. Although zoologists continued to be well represented on Council, fewer and fewer of them looked upon the *Zoologist* as an appropriate place to publish their research. Their attitude was reflected in the general zoological community and the *Zoologist* became more and more a repository for papers that other journals would not publish. However, Whitley and his colleague, Iredale, were happy to use the pages for their historical and biographical works.

One author occupied a lot of space in the journal with an interminable series of papers entitled "Studies on Australian Forest Insects" which were numbered successively and had reached No. 30 by 1970, when a crisis ensued. The lack of editorial discrimination had become known overseas and Whitley published two papers of extremely low standard and of no Australian relevance that had been received from India. Pressed to dilute his absolute authority by working with an editorial board or accepting the refereeing of manuscripts, he refused and resigned from the editorship — a sad moment in the Society's history. However, he continued to write and to manipulate the system. In 1973, he asked to be elected as President of the Society, whereupon he gave a presidential address, "The Early History of Australian Zoology", which was published separately by the Society. (The only presidential address of comparable length was that of A. J. Nicholson in 1927, whose classic "New Theory of Mimicry in Insects" ran to 102 closely printed pages and 14 plates.)

Publication of the *Proceedings* ceased in 1972. Increasingly, its pages had been filled with obituaries and historical material written by Whitley and, while these were of great value to scholars, they were of little interest to most members. It was replaced in 1973 by the popular, zoo-oriented *Koolewong*. For its first two years, this was edited by Jack Prince (a retired zoologist and prolific writer), followed for a year by Erich Friese (then Curator of the Taronga Aquarium). Over that period, more than half of the contents were written by Prince, Friese and Whitley, indicating no great interest on the part of contributors. I was editor from 1975 to 1977 and became similarly involved in filling the pages with my own contributions. Then, in 1978, the responsibility was taken up by Edward Wingfield (a zoo guide with little knowledge of zoology) who, without complaint, brought out four issues each year until publication ceased in June 1985. *Koolewong* probably served its initial purpose of making a bridge between Associate

Members and the Zoo but the Zoo itself was not interested in the exercise. The "Zoo Friends" were in direct competition with the Society for its Associate Members and, when most of these had been wooed away, there was little point in continuing publication.

Returning now to the *The Zoologist,* it must be admitted that, although the successors to Whitley continued much the same rate of publication, they were faced with the fact that the journal seldom attracted papers of high quality. John Simons, of Sydney University, tried for a year. Ted Robinson of Macquarie University continued for five years but was similarly disappointed. Leighton Llewellyn took over the editorship in 1978 and continued until 1983, when the last issues in the traditional format was published. It had become clear that the task of the editor had become largely a matter of coaxing colleagues to write something to fill its pages.

The format of *The Zoologist* was therefore changed to something like that of the recently terminated *Koolewong* but with the option of including some original research contributions. At the same time, it was decided to start a new, irregular, publication, *Australian Zoological Reviews,* that might fill a gap in the Australian zoological literature. Initially, the new *Zoologist* was under joint editorship, Wingfield looking after the popular side and Michael Augee, of the University of New South Wales, responsible for scientific content. After 18 months, Dan Lunney, of the New South Wales National Parks and Wildlife Service, replaced Augee and, in June 1989, he became sole editor. The contents show a strong bias towards his interests in wildlife management and mammalogy but it is a much more vigorous and valuable publication than the old journal.

I was the initial editor of *Reviews* but, so far, it has not been successful, only two issues having been produced. It was not well publicized and I took too much on myself. I hope that it can be resuscitated in the hands of a younger editor.

Looking at the productivity of the *Zoologist* over its history, one can see two peaks. Between 1925 and 1933, about 200 pages were published each year and a volume was published every two years. There was a low period between 1945 and 1960, when the annual output was about 35 pages a year and it took 7–10 years to complete a volume. Then, between about 1970 and 1980, the annual output rose to about 100 pages with a volume about every three years. The "new" *Zoologist* gives the impression of being much slimmer than its predecessor but it is averaging about 125 pages in each annual volume.

At the same time that Council was contemplating the first issue of the *Zoologist,* it embarked on a programme of production of substantial handbooks. Most of these are long out of print and unknown to members, but they constituted a significant contribution to Australian systematic zoology at the time. First was McCullough's *Check List of the Fishes of New South Wales,* published in 1922. Thereafter, at an average interval of three years, 14 handbooks of up to 300 pages in length were published in the fields of fishes, molluscs, insects and birds, the last being Courteney Smithers' *Catalogue of the Psocoptera of the World.* To these can be added two booklets on the history of Australian zoology by Whitley (1970, 1975), a centenary history of the Society by Prince (1979), and a preliminary account of the fossil mammals of Riversleigh by Michael Archer (1989). All of these works were produced by Councillors of the Society.

In the late 1960s there was much public anguish about the culling of kangaroos and the commercial use of their skins and meat. Under the auspices of the Society, Basil Marlow, of the Australian Museum, and I (then Director of the Zoo) organized a symposium that brought together representatives of all the State fauna authorities, the CSIRO, conservation and animal welfare organizations, and the kangaroo industry to share their knowledge and opinions. Published in 1971 as a special issue of the *Zoologist* and made available separately, *Kangaroos and Men* made a great contribution to rational discussion of a complex issue: it was our first symposium. The next symposium, bringing together authorities on the biology of the Koala, was a joint project of the Zoo and the Society. Held in 1975, it was not published until 1978, by which time the Society's first symposium on monotremes was in print. Since 1971, twelve symposia have been published, an average of one a year. More are in the pipeline and this (quite expensive) activity has become one of the most significant contributions made by the Society to Australian zoology.

POPULARIZATION

In the first part of my historical overview, I pointed out that the science of zoology was of little concern to most of its members: they were interested in the Society's zoo at Moore Park. Even after the Council of the Society's had become emphatically scientific, the situation did not change greatly: an enquiry made in 1925 revealed that at least a quarter of the members did not even open their copies of the "Zoologist".

However, even accepting that more than half of the members lived in Mosman or the lower North Shore, and were zoo-oriented, it seemed likely that about half of the remainder might have been interested in zoology if it could be made palatable to ordinary people.

There was a burst of such activity in the form of lectures and demonstrations in the Jubilee Year of 1929. Ten years later, the Society instituted General Meetings for zoological discussions but these was not well attended and, after two years, they faded away. Another attempt was made between 1950 and 1957.

It seems that these enthusiasms recur at about ten-year intervals. In March 1967, I gave a series of ten weekly R.Z.S. evening lectures on evolution in the Hallstrom Theatre: these were very well attended. Next year, three lectures were given: one by John Simons, one by Jack Prince and one by me. And that was that.

In 1972, Council set up a General Activities Section to organize public lectures, field excursions and guided Zoo tours. This survived two years.

Ten years later, in 1983, the monthly Wildlife Forums were established — meetings in which discussion of controversial topics was encouraged. These were initially so successful that each meeting held at the Zoo was repeated the following night at the Museum (so as to accommodate members from both sides of the Harbour). This required considerable organization, for which Marianne Cochrane was largely responsible. Gordon Grigg, Michael Augee and I shared the chairmanship of the meetings but, as attendance declined, we became increasingly depressed by the many occasions when we had to introduce a brilliant visiting speaker to an audience of 10 or less. The last forum was held in 1988.

There is probably a lesson to be learnt from this recital. It may simply be that we can expect another burst of popularization in 1998. Alternatively, it may be that the Society should concentrate on scientific activities, directing more attention to the science graduates who now constitute about half of the membership.

SECTIONS

In 1921, Council resolved to form a number of Sections that would enable members with special interests or skills to work together. First of these was the Entomology Section and it may be noted that it included three very distinguished entomologists. This closed down in 1929, was re-established in 1959, and seceded in 1989. Sections for Ornithology (still in existence) and Economic Zoology (short-lived) were established in 1922. A Zoological Survey Section, based on a cottage at Gundermaian, in Royal National Park, was set up in 1924. A two-room cabin in the southern part of the park near Waterfall, was made available to the Ornithological Section but the Trustees of the Park took back the cottage around 1930 and the Society's property had to be crammed into the cabin. When this was severely vandalized, around 1932, the Section disbanded, but the cabin continued to be used until World War II when increased vandalization made this impossible. A Marine Zoology Section, established in 1926, remained active until 1961.

The standard of these early Sections is indicated by their officers and committees. In 1927, these were:

Entomology: Chairman, G. A. Waterhouse; Vice-Chairman, G. A. Carter.

Ornithology: Chairman, J. R. Kinghorn; Vice-Chairman, H. Wolstoneholme; Hon. Sec., Neville W. Cayley; Committee: E. A. D'Ombrain, A. H. Chisholm, C. Coles, A. Musgrave.

Biological Survey: Chairman, Prof. L. Harrison; Hon. Sec., I. A. Mackerras; Treasurer, G. A. Waterhouse; Committee: Prof. Griffith Taylor, Prof. W. R. Browne, A. J. Nicholson.

Marine Zoology: Chairman, T. C. Roughley; Hon. Sec., W. E. J. Paradice.

Sections for Aviculture and Budgerigars flourished between the early 1930s and late 1950s. These had little relationship to zoology but much to do with the original acclimatization aspirations of the Society. After a gap of about ten years, the Aviculture Section was resurrected in 1969 and is still in existence.

A Conchology Study Group was established in 1950 and, for a time, met with the Marine Zoology Section. It seems to have taken over that Section, which went out of existence within two years of the establishment of the Conchology Section, which still meets monthly.

An attempt to establish a Juniors Section in 1955 failed. Launched again in 1965, it is still functioning. No other Section calls for more dedicated effort on the part of its officers (or officer) than this and, on the whole, it has been very well served.

Between 1957 and 1962 there was a Section devoted to reptiles and mammals. A Herpetology Section was started in 1969 but faded away in 1974. Following wildlife tours that I led to Africa and India, there was some interest in creating a Mammal Section but I discouraged this, on the grounds that the study of native mammals is not readily available to amateurs. Dr Michael Augee took a quite different view and set up the Section. With about equal numbers of professionals and amateurs, it soon became the most active and scientific of all the Sections: it is now in its 18th year.

To some extent, I was also wrong in respect of the Zoo Guides Section. Soon after I became Director of Taronga Zoo, I became interested in recruiting a team of guides, docents or "explainers" to assist adult visitors, but I learned from a number of overseas zoos that it was catastrophic to use under-trained people to pass on information. I was inclined to the Los Angeles approach, which involves some 50 hours of training before docents are let loose on the public. Mrs Barbara Purse, Press Liaison Officer of the Zoo and a Councillor of the Society, was more optimistic and, at the end of 1974, set up a Section with continuous training. It proved a great success, so much so that, after eight years, it was taken over by the Zoo to form a basis of the Association of Zoo Friends.

The present situation is that there is a so-called Ornithological Section which is, in fact, a separate body with no more than historical links to the Society. The Aviculture Section is concerned with breeding birds and has little, if any, relationship to zoology. The Conchology Section is concerned mainly with shell-collecting but has some zoological content. The Junior Section is active in natural history and the Mammal Section is thriving: it is not only a venue for scientific discussion but a group that engages in faunal surveys and other zoological research. The history of the sections is summarized in Figure 1.

EXTERNAL ACTIVITIES

I cannot cover the multitude of conservation activities in which the Society has engaged over the last 80 years; this could be the subject of an illuminating study by another scholar. Perhaps the most significant

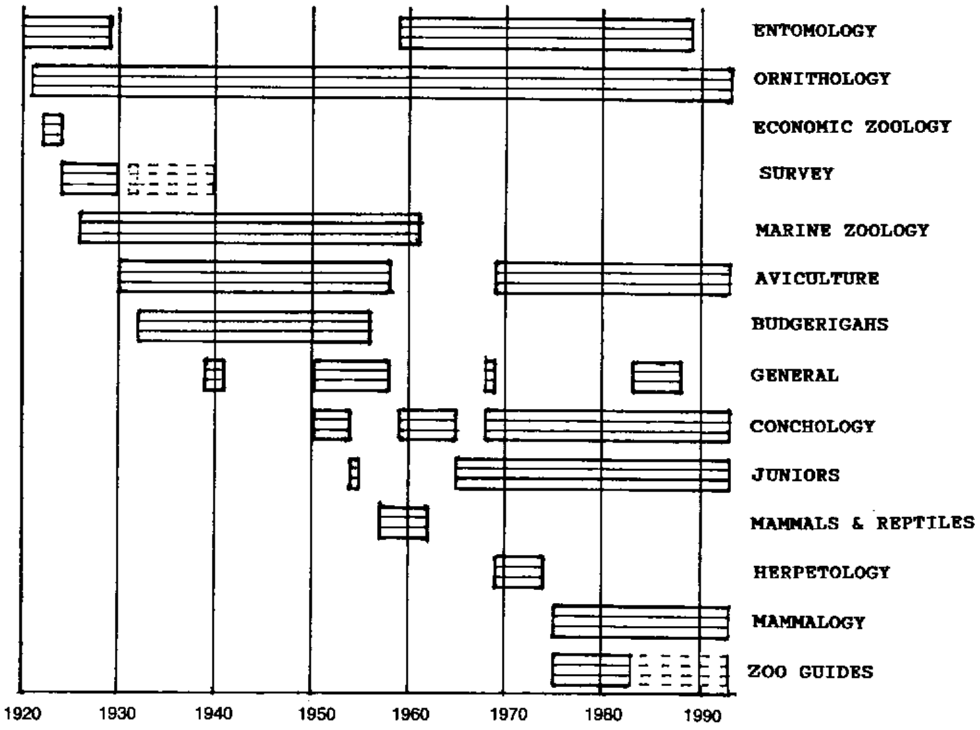

Figure 1. Duration of Sections.

point is that, at least until the Second World War, the Council of the Society constituted the "zoological establishment" of New South Wales and its members were on every government panel, board, trust or enquiry related to wildlife. Indeed, since most Councillors were prominent in at least one or more other professional bodies, it was not uncommon to find that (wearing a variety of hats) members of the Council constituted a majority on such bodies.

When wildlife conservation became a popular middle-class issue in the 1960s, the political influence of the Society became diluted. Its solitary scientific eminence had already been challenged by the post-war proliferation of more specialized scientific societies. I shall mention only two examples of early extramural activities.

In his presidential address of 1919, W. W. Froggatt set out a prospectus for a Commonwealth Bureau of Biological Survey. Over the next 50 years, the necessity for such a body was reiterated by the Society, particularly through its links with the Australia and New Zealand Association for the Advancement of Science. The Bureau of Flora and Fauna was established in 1979 and, although the Society cannot claim the credit, it contributed to the climate of opinion that led to its creation.

Prior to such compendia as the IUCN Red Book, the Society made many submissions to State and Commonwealth Governments, drawing attention to endangered species. It strongly criticized the Tasmanian government for its attitude to the Thylacine and eventually, in 1938, the Tasmanian Fauna Board invited the Society to send a representative to join a search for the species. Michael Sharland was sent. As we now known, this was a little late, the last known individual having died (in captivity) two years earlier.

Over the past 20 years, The Society has been very selective in its public pronouncements, preferring to let its published symposia speak for themselves. However, it has supported the controlled harvesting of kangaroos, even to the point of recommending that kangaroos be "farmed", instead of sheep, in marginal grazing lands — to the betterment of the soil and the native flora and fauna.

In 1976, the Society received $1,000 in Gilbert Whitley's will. Council agonized for months over what to do with this relatively small sum, but I eventually proposed that it should be spent on minting silver medals, commemorating Whitley and reflecting his interests. Gordon Grigg and I formulated the philosophy and mechanics of an award system, headed by the Whitley Medal, to be awarded annually "to the author of the book judged to have made the best contribution in that year to the natural history of Australian animals or to the history of zoological studies in Australia". The first awards were made in 1979.

It was hoped that the publicity generated by the awards would encouraged higher standards and greater originality on the part of authors and publishers: there are signs of some such effect. The Society has also benefited: whereas there had been virtually no book acquisitions in the forty years prior to 1979, since then it has received almost every book on a zoological topic that has been published in Australia.

A single-bedroom home unit was bequeathed to the Society by Ethel Mary Read in 1975. In contrast to Whitley (who was almost synonymous with the Society), Ms Read was unknown to any member of Council. Enquiries revealed that she had joined as a Life Member about 15 years previously.

Initially valued at $14,000, the unit brought in about $1,000 a year in rent. However, in 1984, Claudia Ford, then Assistant Treasurer, proposed that the property be sold and the proceeds ($38,000) used as the basis of a fund, the interest from which would be used to provide research grants (up to $600 each) to young zoologists. Michael Archer took on the arduous task of translating this principle into legal actuality and the scheme has been operating since 1986. In June 1992, the Ethel Mary Read Research Grant Fund stood at $44,500.

THE FOUNDATION

In *The First One Hundred Years*, Jack Prince closed with a long chapter, "Our Hall of Fame", consisting of a series of short biographies of some notable early members. This could well be expanded to cover many more members (mostly Councillors) who have contributed significantly to Australian zoology over the past 80 years. I am not going to attempt this task but, in closing, I want to pay tribute to a few people who have maintained the foundations of the Society, working behind the scenes on the arduous, boring, necessary work associated with the management of the Society.

I have already mentioned A. F. Bassett Hull as Editor and President. He also held the position of Secretary for 18 years. Leone

Harford, a member of the Conchology Section, was Secretary from 1952 to 1971, one year longer than Hull. Michael Augee was Secretary from 1982 to 1986, during which time he completely reorganized the membership records and brought the Society into the computer age: he also served two periods as President and convened two major symposia on monotremes. Augee was followed as Secretary by Marianne Cochrane (1986–92), a born organizer, whose dedicated input enabled the Council to handle the greatly increased responsibilities that it took on at that time.

Even less recognized have been the so-called "Assistant" Secretaries or Treasurers who handle the day-to-day business of the Society, particularly membership. Olive Wills, a members of the Conchology Section, was Assistant Secretary for 12 years (1966–1978). Arthur White, a professional zoologist and teacher, held this position from 1979 to 1990. Betty Bull, has managed the office as Assistant Treasurer since 1984 and continues to do so.

Without such dedicated people, there may well have been no history for me to explore.

HANDBOOKS AND REPRINTS

1922 Check List of the Fishes of New South Wales. A. R. McCullough.
1927 A Monograph of the Australian Loricates. T. Iredale and A. F. Bassett Hull.
1932 A Bibliography of Australian Entomology, 1775–1930. A. Musgrave.
1938 Basic List of the Land Molluscs of Australia. T. Iredale.
1940 The Fishes of Australia: Sharks and Rays. G. P. Whitley.
1943 Australian Insects. K. C. McKeown.
1944 The Bees of Australia. T. D. Cockerell.
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